

## CLAIMS

### I claim:

1. An apparatus comprising  
a skipping control device; and  
a video recording and playback device including skipping functions;  
wherein the video recording and playback device receives a video signal;  
and wherein the skipping control device receives a content classification signal and  
uses it to determine whether to send a control signal to the video recording and  
playback device, wherein the control signal affecting operation of the skipping functions  
of the video recording and playback device.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein  
the control signal disables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback  
device.
3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein  
the control signal enables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback  
device.
4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein  
the skipping control device receives a first management parameter; and  
wherein the skipping control device uses both the content classification signal and

the first management parameter to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the skipping control device receives a plurality of management parameters; and  
wherein the skipping control device uses both the content classification signal and the plurality of management parameters to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

6. An apparatus comprising

a skipping control device; and  
a video recording and playback device including skipping functions;  
wherein the video recording and playback device receives a video signal;  
and wherein the skipping control device receives a first management parameter and uses it to determine whether to send a control signal to the video recording and playback device, wherein the control signal affects operation of the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein

the skipping control device receives a plurality of management parameters; and  
wherein the skipping control device uses the plurality of management parameters to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

8. An apparatus comprising

a video plus content classification signal reading and decryption device;

a skipping control device; and

a video recording and playback device including skipping functions;

wherein the video plus content classification signal reading and decryption device

receives a video plus content classification signal;

extracts a video signal from the video plus content classification signal;

extracts a content classification signal from the video plus content classification signal;

supplies the video signal to the video recording and playback device; and

supplies the content classification signal to the skipping control device;

and wherein the skipping control device uses the content classification signal to determine whether to send a control signal to the video recording and playback device, wherein the control signal affecting operation of the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein

the skipping control device receives a first management parameter; and

wherein the skipping control device uses both the content classification signal and the first management parameter to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein

the skipping control device receives a plurality of management parameters; and

wherein the skipping control device uses both the content classification signal and the plurality of management parameters to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

11. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein

the control signal disables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device when a portion of the content classification signal indicates that a related portion of the video signal has commercial content, and the control signal enables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device when a portion of the content classification signal indicates that a related portion of the video signal has regular content.

12. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a television channel.

13. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a television program.

14. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a television program classification.

15. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a date that the video signal was recorded.

16. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a time that the video signal was recorded.

17. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a user subscription to a service.

18. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a user subscription level to a service.

19. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein

the plurality of parameters are comprised of

an allowed number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time;

a currently used number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time;

wherein if the allowed number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time is greater than the currently used number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time then the control signal enables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device when the content classification signal indicates that the video signal includes commercial content

20. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein

the plurality of parameters are comprised of

a complete disabling parameter that causes the skipping control device to completely disable the skipping functions of the video playback and recording device independent of the content classification signal.

21. A method comprising the steps of:

receiving a content classification signal relating to the content of a video signal  
and using it to determine whether to send a control signal to a video recording and  
playback device having skipping functions; and

sending the control signal to the video recording and playback device;

wherein the control signal affects skipping functions of the video recording and  
playback device.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein

the control signal disables the skipping functions of the video recording and  
playback device.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein

the control signal enables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback  
device.

24. The method of claim 21 further comprising

receiving a first management parameter; and

using both the content classification signal and the first management parameter to  
determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording  
device.

25. The method of claim 24 further comprising

receiving a plurality of management parameters; and

using both the content classification signal and the plurality of management parameters to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

26. A method comprising the steps of

receiving a video signal;

receiving a first management parameter and using it to determine whether to send a control signal to a video recording and playback device having skipping functions; and

sending the control signal to the video recording and playback device;

wherein the control signal affects operation of the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device.

27. The method of claim 26 further comprised of the steps of

receiving a plurality of management parameters; and

using the plurality of management parameters to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

28. A method comprising the steps of

receiving a video plus content classification signal;

extracting a video signal from the video plus content classification signal;

extracting a content classification signal from the video plus content classification signal;

supplying the video signal to a video recording and playback device, having skipping functions; and

supplying the content classification signal to a skipping control device;

and wherein the skipping control device uses the content classification signal to determine whether to send a control signal to the video recording and playback device, wherein the control signal affecting operation of the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device.

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising

receiving a first management parameter; and

wherein the skipping control device uses both the content classification signal and the first management parameter to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

30. The method of claim 29 further comprising

receiving a plurality of management parameters; and

wherein the skipping control device uses both the content classification signal and the plurality of management parameters to determine whether to send the control signal to the video playback and recording device.

31. The method of claim 21 wherein

the control signal disables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device when a portion of the content classification signal indicates that a related portion of the video signal has commercial content, and the control signal enables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device when a portion of the content classification signal indicates that a related portion of the video signal has regular content.



32. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a television channel.

33. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a television program.

34. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a television program classification.

35. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a date that the video signal was recorded.

36. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a time that the video signal was recorded.

37. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a user subscription to a service.

38. The method of claim 21 wherein

the first management parameter identifies a user subscription level to a service.

39. The method of claim 25 wherein

the plurality of parameters are comprised of

an allowed number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time;

a currently used number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time;

wherein if the allowed number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time is greater than the currently used number of credit points of commercial skips for a given period of time then the control signal enables the skipping functions of the video recording and playback device when the content classification signal indicates that the video signal includes commercial content

40. The apparatus of claim 25 wherein

the plurality of parameters are comprised of

a complete disabling parameter that causes the skipping control device to completely disable the skipping functions of the video playback and recording device independent of the content classification signal.